Audition Advice

The following advice is presented to help you succeed – not just with this audition, but any audition you ever take during your playing career.

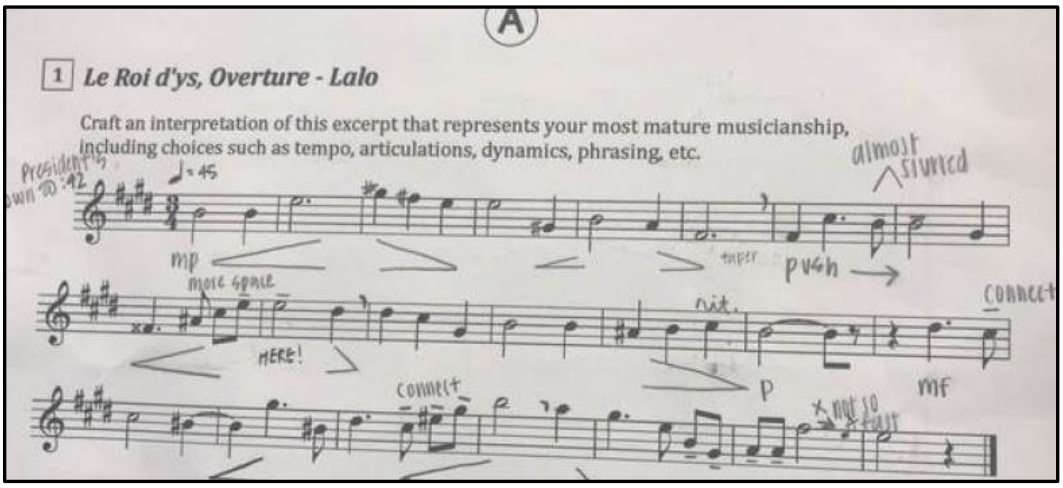
BEFORE THE AUDITION

- Get an early start. If you wait until the last minute to put together your audition, it will **not** go well. Prepare a little each day, maybe breaking it up into reasonable chunks: *Today I will work on my chromatic scale. Tomorrow, I will work on the first excerpt*. Etc.
- The greatest source of anxiety during an audition is failure to adequately prepare the materials. If you are well-prepared, you will be much less nervous! Preparation includes knowing the correct tempos, styles, articulations, etc., *in addition to* knowing the correct notes and rhythms. Basically…prepare your excerpts until you cannot play them wrong.
- Don't know what a musical term means? There's Google. Don't know how one of the excerpts goes? There's YouTube or Spotify. Don't know if you're in tune or if you've got the correct tempo? There is an app for that. Don't know your scales? There are tons of online resources to help you learn them. ***Use*** these resources to ensure that you are prepared for your audition. Give yourself the best chance for a positive experience. If you fail to prepare, be prepared to fail.
- Work on your scales and arpeggios. ALL of them, including the chromatic scale. While most auditions will not ask for minor scales, it is wise to know all of them as well. Know all of your major scales (and the chromatic scale) by heart.
- Be on time and warmed up. Make sure your instrument and reeds/equipment are working properly, and leave your case outside of the audition room.

DURING THE AUDITION

- Dress somewhat professionally for the audition. How you look has an impact on how people listening to you *perceive* your playing. Dress sloppily, and listeners are more apt to hear your mistakes. It will also make you feel subconsciously less confident. If you dress in a semi-professional manner, you will ***feel*** more professional…and if you feel professional, you are more likely to have a great audition. You don't have to wear a suit or a fancy dress...but flip flops and a ragged t-shirt are probably a (very) bad idea.
- Do not "aim" your instrument at the judges, especially if you are a directional instrument like the trumpet or trombone. Aim slightly to the side of the listeners.
- Don't start a passage over if you make a mistake, and don't ask "*Can I start over?*" If you make a mistake, *recover* from it, and keep going. Quite often, audition judges are listening for your ability to recover from mistakes, as much as anything else you might have prepared.

- Don't make excuses or apologies for anything, and don't draw attention to any problems. It is possible that the judging panel may not have noticed.
- Perform the correct tempos! Use a metronome in your preparations to help you with this, and do not slow down just because a passage is tricky, or speed up because a passage is easy. Maintain a *steady* tempo throughout, unless the music calls for something different.
- Think about style and interpretation...don't just come in and play a "vanilla" rendition of the excerpts, devoid of dynamics, articulations, or <u>*feeling*</u>. Let your musicianship shine through. If you are asked to prepare your own interpretation of an excerpt, then prepare SOME kind of interpretation. ANYTHING. It can be as simple and tasteful as this:



- In general, you should always execute rests at their given duration, without altering the tempo. However, if there is a section of the music with a long rest, you may ask how the judges wish for you to proceed before you begin the music.
- Pay special attention to note durations...*especially* sustained notes. If you have a dotted half note at the end of a phrase, the judges expect to hear 3 beats, not 2, not 2.5, not 3.25, etc.
- Take the time to imagine the mood, style, and character of the excerpts you are playing before you begin. Pausing to gather your thoughts will also allow you to mindfully breathe, which may help lower your anxiety and put you in a more relaxed state.

AFTER THE AUDITION

- Relax. It isn't life or death. You may take several auditions throughout the course of your career, and each one is an opportunity to learn what you can do better. We expect that many, if not most of you, will be nervous/anxious...and this is ok. Seriously.
- At an audition like this, we are basically looking for students who are good players with potential to <u>grow</u> as musicians…we are **not** looking for perfection. Deficiencies and mistakes can be overlooked if there is talent, determination to succeed, and a willingness to work hard.

Best of luck to you as you prepare your audition materials!

Northern Kentucky University

FALL 2025 - Wind Symphony Auditions

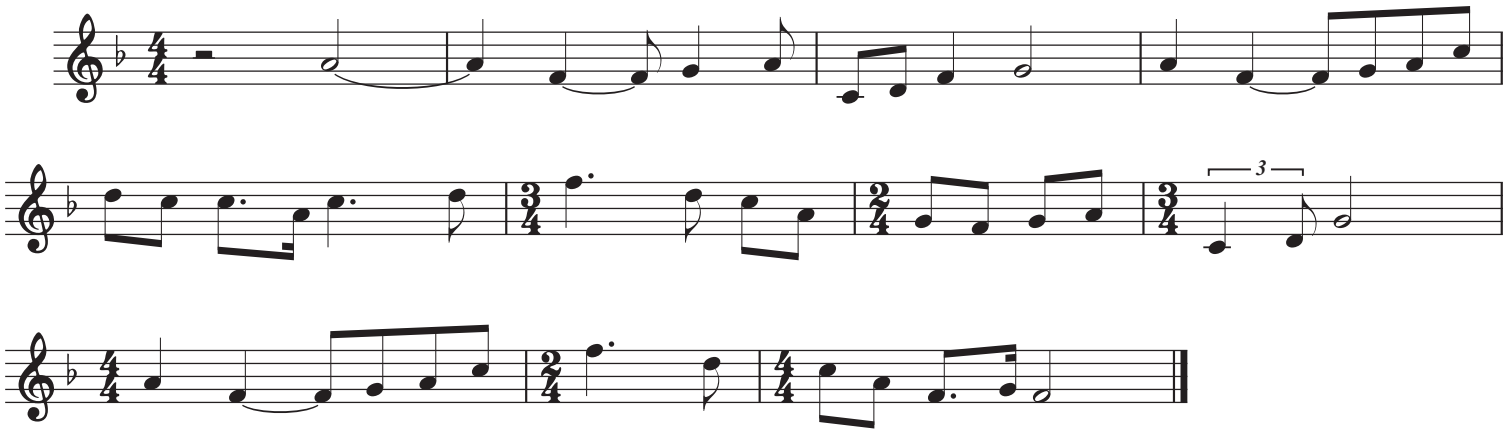
BASS CLARINET

1 **CHROMATIC SCALE** - Starting on any preferred pitch, perform a **two-octave** chromatic scale; articulated on the way up, and slurred on the way down.

2 **SCALES -** Play at least **four (4)** scales with arpeggios (any major and/or minor scales are acceptable). All scales should be at least **two octaves**, articulated on the way up, and slurred on the way down (including the arpeggio). Please announce your scales before performing them.

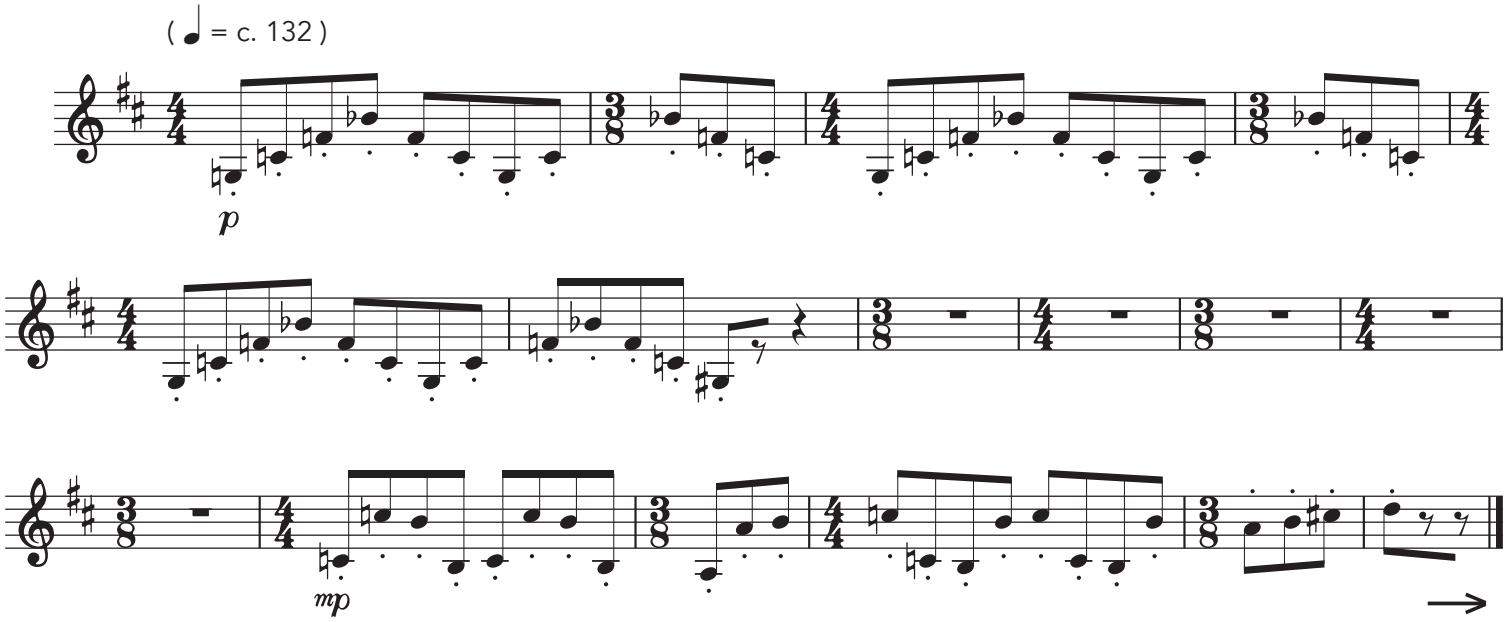
3 **INTERPRETATION** - Create an ***interpretation*** of the excerpt below that represents your most mature musicianship, including choices such as tempo, articulations, dynamics, phrasing, etc.

***Colonial Song* - Percy Aldridge Grainger**

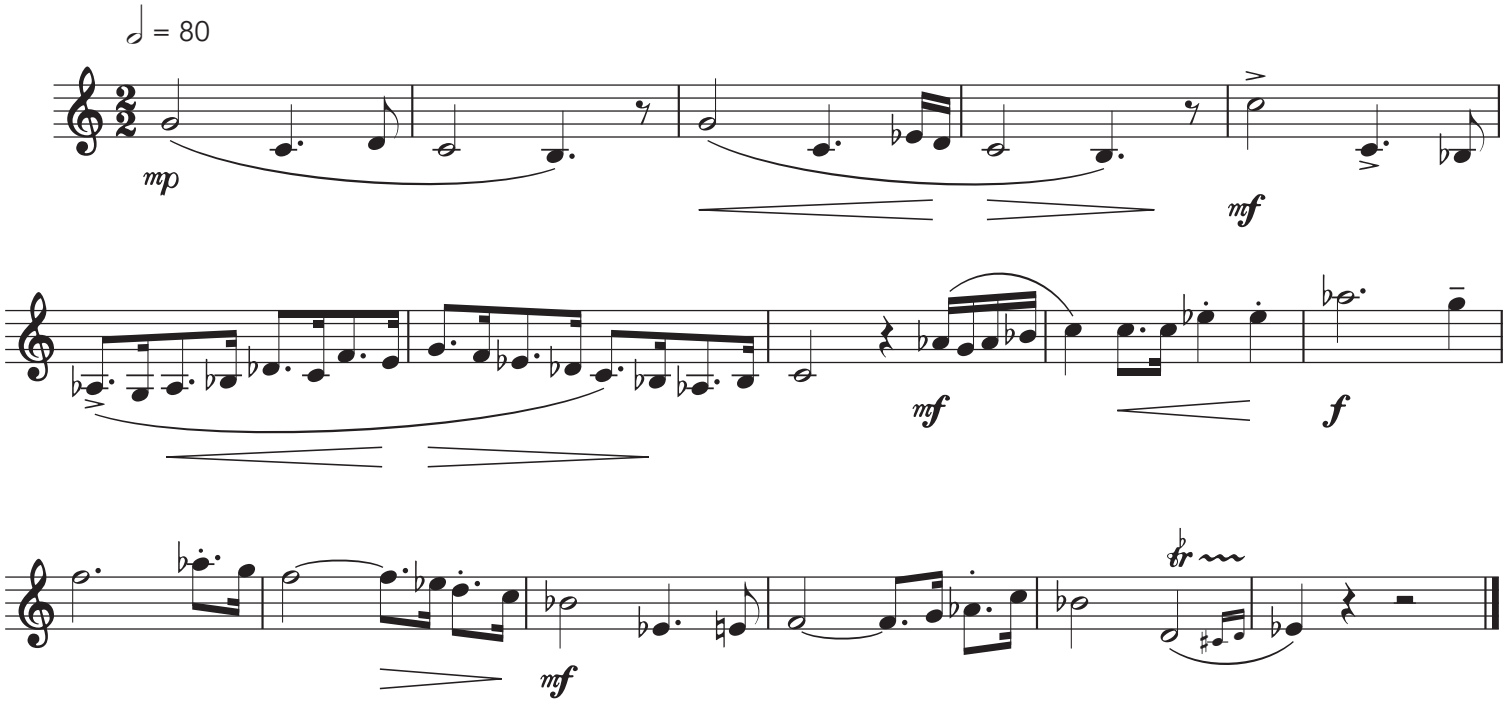
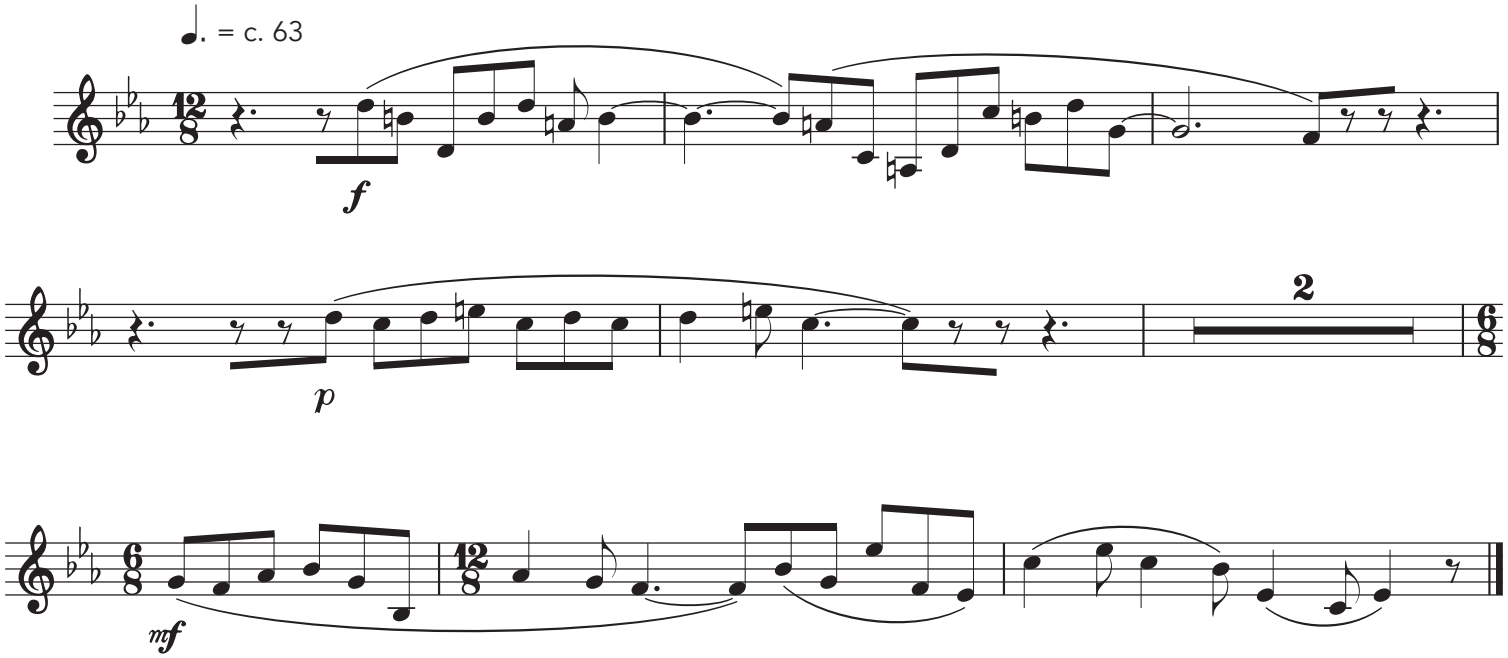


4 **EXCERPTS** - Play any **two** of the following three excerpts. Those who wish to be considered for a **principal/1st chair** position should play **all three** excerpts.

***Profanation from Symphony No. 1* - Leonard Bernstein/tr. Bencriscutto**



***Symphonic Metamorphosis, Mvmt. IV* - Paul Hindemith/tr. Wilson** [Audio: ~0:10 mark on most recordings]



***Sinfonietta, Mvmt. II* - Ingolf Dahl** [Audio: ~2:35 mark on most recordings]